

Juduser

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2022 3:16 PM
To: JudTestimony
Subject: Bills SB386,387,392,16,365 and HB5417,5418

Good morning to all distinguished members of the Ct Judiciary Committee:

My name is Barbara Fair and I am mother, grandmother and great grandmother first, a state licensed clinical social worker, West Haven resident voter and a long time advocate for one Connecticut and avid supporter of equal justice and opportunities for all Ct residents. Because I am who I am I come to you in testimony in support of any efforts to improve the quality of life for our young people and in opposition to anything that does not.

I am here to voice my support, concerns and opposition to Senate bills 16, 365, 386, 387,392 and House bills #5417 and 5418.

First let me say I am astonished at all the time spent proposing legislation to effectively be more harsh on our young people when many of our adults are involved in actions which we should be focusing our time. Actions from people like police officers, prosecutors, legislators and even Ct's top prosecutor who get to retire with huge pensions and excellent benefits after involvement in unscrupulous behavior. I see no proposals to begin in law enforcement involved in acts from theft of government funds, lying, engaging in sex for favors, driving under the influence, domestic violence assaulting and actually murdering people. Recently a candidate for police officer is caught stealing months before graduating from the academy and he is simply placed on probation and moved to another barrack and the correctional officer recently arrested for bringing drugs and phones inside the facilities for sale to incarcerated people. This same body can't even accept policies or laws that attempt to reign them in.

Those are stories for another hearing. I'm going to just leave that there and move onto the proposed legislation to reign in the youth whose car theft has inspired this new "tough on youth crime" rhetoric even though there is reported evidence car theft has actually decreased. I'm also noting the increased category of "serious juvenile offenses" wondering where are we heading in this constitutional state of Connecticut and why the intent to crush young people in certain communities and using police, prosecutor and judge "discretion" to protect others.

SB386 Work group should include membership from those who actually experience the impact of these laws. They are the true "experts". The "usual suspects" are why we don't see real change in crime. Most are generally people closely attached to law enforcement. The "new" group almost completely mirrors JJPOC. Why are we trying to displace that group?

SB387- Support youth and parents who have actually experienced education inside these institutions of care. True experts. Support having appointments of youth and parents who live in high arrests/over policed communities. Support adding pedestrian stops in racial profiling legislation since in poorer communities countless stops are people on foot, sitting on their porch or riding a bike. If this bill is followed we will get a much closer view of profiling in marginalized communities.. There should be stated consequences for officers who stop people without completing form and presenting the person with the form indicating why they were stopped and the outcome. Any department out of compliance should lose state funding. We should absolutely ban all suspensions/expulsions of babies (pre-K-4). This policy is completely ridiculous. Instead invest in funding to enhance young people flourishing in their communities.

SB392 - Support expanding protection to young people (under 18) in making statements without guidance of a parent and or counsel) Police should respect the right to refuse to give statement or speak without parent or counsel or face strict sanctions.

SB16- Support "less restrictive" environment for young people arrested while judicial process continues. Hopefully assessment is fair and validity proven. Concerned about restrictions with use of GPS. Will it be 24 hr home confinement, does it lend itself to regular family events, school, work etc? Concerned about "disobeying direct order from police becoming a serious juvenile offense because young people (any even adults in these days of shoot and ask questions later climate) instinctively avoid police encounter. The government should only fund programs which have been proven to be effective in preventing or effectively intervening in crime and violence. For far too long programs have been funded with no proven accountability simply because they have name familiarity and/ or they write up great proposals

and/or great annual reports. ***More time and effort must be invested in funding programs proven effective in trauma treatment, crime and violence intervention/prevention.*** Talk directly to program participants to inquire if the program effectively improved their quality of life.. I'm concerned about holding a child in custody for 6-8 hours awaiting a judge's decision to detain (or not) especially if no direct contact with their parent has been allowed during that time. . Arrest and detainment of a child is extremely traumatizing.

HB5417- Support any resources to marginalized communities so long as they have been proven to be effective in addressing the root cause of crime and violence. Most children do not commit crime for fun or get involved in violent acts without provocation. Poverty drives crime and violence is mostly driven by violence done to them whether in home. school. on the streets or inside correctional facilities or other abusive settings. Many in marginalized communities face traumatic incidents on a regular basis. Trauma impacts behavior and how we see the world around us. If programs are not addressing these issues they are simply spitting in the wind, making baseless promises and doing what many call "pimping the pain and suffering of the marginalized". Because I am very connected to struggling youth and their families in New Haven I have witnessed programs receive millions and do a poor job of providing much of anything substantive to families while others who are effective in making a difference struggle to intervene without financial support because they are not great grant writers. Oppose increasing time spent incarcerated from 30-60 months unless more time has been effective in behavior modification and led to a more successful outcome..

HB5418 - Oppose decreasing age of automatic transfer to adult court to 13. 14 and 15 is bad enough because we know scientifically a 14 and 15 year old developing brain is not advanced enough to control impulses and is prone to peer pressure.If anything we should be working toward ending the criminalization of our young people and providing them with the resources ALL children need to grow, thrive and flourish within their communities. Oppose excluding "certain offenses" from automatic erasures and strongly oppose eliminating JJPOC. What we should be doing is strengthening their ability to bring real change.

SB365 - Oppose child having counsel appear for them yet counsel can't argue or file motion in opposition to transfer. Questioning why that exception is being made. Concerned laws may minimize "what is in the best interest of child". Support any avenues taken to deter or prevent crime making sure justice impacted people and their families are included in any discussion about policy that will impact their lives and finally we should be making these changes before 2024. The time to do the right thing is now.

Addressing poverty in a real way is what we should be doing here. Poverty is the engine that drives crime. If all communities were supported in the same way across Ct crime would likely be at the same levels. It's not about the people. It's about circumstances and environments in which some young people are pushed to survive while others are provided with all the resources they need to thrive.. It's about looking in the mirror and deep within and asking yourselves why am I pushing this tough on youth crime rhetoric when the adults don't even have it right yet. Let's work on making sure we reign in adults whom children and youth are looking to for answers on how to be in this world. Let's work to make Connecticut one state and work on policy intent upon making us better in all areas. let's push the PROTECT Act to signage and begin to be better human beings and uphold the human dignity of ALL people including those held in state custody.

Thank you for your time and attention. Have a blessed day.

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